Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the many friends, practitioners and academics who have helped me reach the level of excellence I was pursuing throughout the writing of this book.

First and foremost, I would like to warmly thank my friend Gwendoline Dandoy for her help. Chapter after chapter, she carefully hunted down mistakes and inconsistencies, allowing the content of this book to be clearer, simpler and more consistent. Thank you, Gwen.

I would like to thank the publishing team at De Gruyter: Jeffrey Pepper, Jaya Dalal, as well as Mary Sudul for their incredible work, support and trust.

The help of many experts and practitioners was essential to the writing of this book. I am particularly grateful to three of them for their invaluable help, reviews, advice and corrections. Koen Cobbaert (Director at PwC) for our discussions about backorders, lost sales and multi-echelon inventory optimization. Stefan de Kok (Wahupa CEO & Founder) for our discussions about safety stock and probabilistic forecasts (his book *An Introduction to Probabilistic Planning and Forecasting* will be available by the end of 2020). Steven Pauly (Research Scientist at Slimstock) for our discussions about various inventory models, the tremendous number of models and papers he advised me about and his careful review of all the math included in this book.

I also had the great pleasure of discussing concepts with Professors Ton de Kok (Eindhoven University of Technology), Stephan Graves (MIT) and Sean Willems (Haslam Chair in Supply Chain Analytics at University of Tennessee). Ton de Kok for his help on single-echelon inventory policies; Stephan Graves and Sean Willems for their help on multi-echelon inventory policies.

Special thanks goes to the whole Qalinca research unit (Université Libre de Bruxelles) and in particular Professor Alassane Ndiaye, for his advice and kind support. I am also grateful to my colleagues: Alexis Nsamzinshuti, Haingo Rabarijaona, Yasin Tadayonard and Carole Biloé, and to my previous students Lynda Dhaeyer and Fanny Marcelis, who all provided me with continuous support and numerous reviews.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to my friends Romain Faurès, François Grisay and Charles Hoffreumon for their numerous reviews and invaluable advice. Romain for his dedicated reviews and spot-on remarks, François for his consultant point of view (usually shared in cafés and restaurants) and Charles for his statistician point of view (usually shared in his office at the university).

A special thanks goes to Joannes Vermorel (Lokad CEO) who has been a constant source of inspiration to me since we first started working on Bridgestone inventory optimization models in 2017. You can see Joannes and myself discussing inventory and forecasting on YouTube.¹ Joannes published his book *The Quantitative Supply Chain* in 2018.²

¹ See Lokad TV episodes 30 and 33 https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5r43_A7T7qXATy-uvNuJ5Q

² Vermorel (2018).

I can also always count on the LinkedIn supply chain community. I would like to especially thank Niels De Smet (PhD researcher at Solventure & UGent) for his help on multi-echelon models, Suraj Vissa, Steve Frampton and Guillaume De Bruycker for their help, corrections and reviews. The reliability of the supply chain community on LinkedIn is impressive: no matter the question, there will always be someone there to help you.

I also had the great pleasure of working with my Bridgestone colleagues Jon San Andres, Niek Vaessen and Henri-Xavier Benoist. Year after year, our team managed to consistently deliver new models by pushing data science in supply chains further.

Last but not least, my friend Nathalie Dufour for her reviews—she allowed me to make the first part of the book more clear. Finally, special thanks to my family Veronique and Pierre Vandeput-Dellis, Caroline and Quentin Vandeput-Mortier as well as my friends Bruno and Emmeline Deremince-Everaert and Nicolas and Flore Pary-D'Argent for their support throughout 2019.

Nicolas Vandeput

February 2020

nicolas.vandeput@supchains.com